THE AMERICAN ALLIANCE for Palestinian Human Rights

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BULLETIN

October-November 1991

In the Christian Science Monitor of October 31, Peter Ford, writing from Madrid about the peace talks, mentioned the invisible issue of widespread abuses of human rights in the Middle East. He cited a just-released report by Middle East Watch which points out that the link between human rights and security was affirmed both in the Helsinki Accords of 1975 and the Central American pact of 1987. The report stated that human rights are firmly on the agenda at Jugoslav peace talks in The Hague.

Human rights were also reported on the agenda of Secretary Baker's visit to China. Human rights are truly a part of the fabric of the United States. Federal laws require that the human rights practices of recipients of US foreign aid be reported annually to the Congress. Israel receives annually large grants from the US.

Israel, which has no constitution, does not guarantee equal rights for minorities. Jackson Diehl of the Washington Post Foreign Service wrote (October 5) about the Arab Bedouin families, 90 people, living inside Israel, in a town named Ramyah, their ancestral home since before Israel was born. They live on 25 acres, along with livestock and olive trees. Diehl wrote "***Although they are citizens of Israel who held legal title to their land, the residents of Ramyah, which was expropriated by the government in 1976, will be expelled from their homes sometime in the coming weeks.***" [Emphasis added] Their homes and olive groves will be bulldozed to make way for the construction of a new neighborhood for Soviet Jewish immigrants.

Israel's acts of oppression against Arabs involve policies and practices that, if they occurred in any country against Jews, would be rightly condemned as anti-Semitism. They are about property, taxes, water, employment, travel, commerce, education, health, arrest, trials, detention, as well as direct physical assault - shootings, beatings, and teargassing. All are well documented by unquestionable sources including the US State Department, Amnesty International, Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, Physicians for Human Rights, and many more.

Shamir seems unconcerned with the reactions of other states to such acts. Witness Israeli's establishment of a new settlement in the Golan Heights even as the peace talks started. Yet Shamir wants US taxpayers to support a budget with millions of dollars earmarked for a guarantee of $10 billion in loans to Israel.